

Dear Vincent Candelora,

March 3, 2014

Thank you and the thoughtful legislators for looking ahead for the welfare of our children, and country's future. Common Core comes to us at a challenging time, when so many parents are struggling with our stagnant economy. I'm sure that many more folks will voice their concerns about Common Core when they become informed, which unfortunately may be too late. Common Core shows up on our doorstep as a solution to educational problems. However, could it be a modern "Trojan Horse", posing as a gift, but hollow and defeating in reality.

Stan Karp states, "The trouble with the Common Core is not primarily what is in these standards or what's been left out, although that's certainly at issue. The bigger problem is the role the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) are playing in the larger dynamics of current school reform and education politics."

Common Core has been designed by politicians and businesses, and not by educators, or teachers. Private business sectors, like Bill Gates and Bloomboard, have lobbied and invested substantial funds to promote Common Core.

Large businesses and corporate minded groups are suffering in our American economy, therefore looking at one of the last internal goldmine, tax dollars. When we think about how much tax funding goes into education, it makes sense that business would want to get a piece of that pie.

Common Core requires complete technological renovations of schools. Unbelievable numbers of computers, software, software and hardware leasing, and companies who develop tests. Once the "foot is in the door", our towns and state will have no choice but to pay increasing funds to support this giant infrastructure.

Our Commissioner of Education, Stephen Pryor, has shown his true colors as a deputy mayor in Newark. His "Teacher's Village" was a roach infested inner-ghetto apartment complex designed to house teachers. Encouraging teachers to live there had a hidden agenda. Stephen Pryor then invited his "business buddies" to buy retail buildings in that neighborhood to profit from the teachers, or "new money" that would be pressured to live there. His past exposes intentions.

Stephen Pryor sees teachers as a corps, or type of temporary "educational forces". If children's learning becomes software and computer based, and teachers, as we know them, can be eliminated, then all that's needed is a "corps" of younger, less educated and experienced teachers. Their job would be to keep the computers on, and chaperone the students. Who is guiding our children then? Microsoft, Apple, or Bloomboard?

Our State has always invested in education, and while improvement is always necessary, we should render caution to Common Core, so that we don't throw the baby out with the bath water. Yes, we have an educational gap that is wedged in poverty, and this is a huge challenge for teachers and schools. Teachers have been vocal in sharing that they need resources, and support outside of school from parents and communities.

Connecticut ranks 5th in our country in the percentage of college and graduate school educated population. Connecticut scored among the Nation's top percentages on the Nation's Report Card, and our CMT testing was one of the most concentrated and thorough state tests given.

While Stephen Pryor has his sights on big business intervention and relationships, which will be a financial stepping stone for him when he's long gone, it may cost us more than billions. It may cost a less than effective educational system for our children.

The following list of facts and considerations about Common Core come from an article written by Stan Karp:

[A 10-year experiment in the use of federally mandated standards and tests called No Child Left Behind \(NCLB\) that has been almost universally acknowledged as a failure.](#)

The adoption of test-based teacher evaluation frameworks in dozens of states, largely as a result of federal mandates.

Multiple rounds of budget cuts and layoffs that have left 34 of the 50 states providing less funding for education than they did five years ago, and the elimination of more than 300,000 teaching positions.

A wave of privatization that has increased the number of publicly funded but privately run charter schools by 50 percent, while nearly 4,000 public schools have been closed in the same period.

An appalling increase in the inequality and child poverty surrounding our schools, categories in which the United States leads the world and that tell us far more about the source of our educational problems than the uneven quality of state curriculum standards.

A dramatic increase in the cost and debt burden of college access.

A massively well-financed campaign of billionaires and politically powerful advocacy organizations that seeks to replace our current system of public education—which, for all its many flaws, is probably the most democratic institution we have and one that has done far more to address inequality, offer hope, and provide opportunity than the country's financial, economic, political, and media institutions—with a market-based, non-unionized, privately managed system.

Sincerely,

Mr. Ralph L. DeLucia